



My Drift

Title: Indonesia

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Over the past 13 years I have written articles about every region of the world except one – INDONESIA. It is time to fix this oversight.

Some General Info

Indonesia is in Southeast Asia between the Indian and Pacific oceans. It is the world's largest island country, with more than seventeen thousand islands, and at 735,358 square miles, the 14th largest by land area and the 7th largest in combined sea and land area. With over 268 million people, it is the world's 4th most populous country as well as the most populous Muslim-majority country. Java, the world's most populous island, is home to more than half of the country's population.



Jakarta, the country's capital, has a population of over 10 million people and second most populous urban area (behind Tokyo) in the world with a population of over 32 million. Indonesia's massive capital sits on the northwest coast of the island of Java. A historic mix of cultures – Javanese, Malay, Chinese, Arab, Indian and European – has influenced its architecture, language and cuisine. The old town, Kota Tua, is home to Dutch colonial buildings, Glodok (Jakarta's Chinatown) and the old port of Sunda Kelapa, where traditional wooden schooners dock.



Capital City of Jakarta Map



Traditional Wooden Schooners

The country shares land borders with Papua New Guinea, East Timor, and the eastern part of Malaysia. Other neighboring countries include Singapore, Vietnam, the Philippines, Australia, Palau, and India's Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Despite its large population and densely populated regions, Indonesia has vast areas of wilderness that support a high level of biodiversity. The country has abundant natural resources like oil and natural gas, tin, copper and gold. Agriculture mainly produces rice, palm oil, tea, coffee, cacao, medicinal plants, spices and rubber. Indonesia's major trading partners are China, United States, Japan, Singapore and India.

The history of the Indonesian has been influenced by foreign powers drawn to its natural resources. It has been an important region for trade since at least the 7th century when it traded with mainland China and the Indian subcontinent. Local rulers gradually absorbed foreign cultural, religious and political models from the early centuries and Hindu and Buddhist kingdoms flourished. Muslim traders brought Islam, while European powers brought Christianity. Although sometimes interrupted by the Portuguese, French and British, the Dutch were the foremost European power for much of its 350-year presence in the area. In early 20th century, the concept of "Indonesia" as a nation state emerged, and independence movements began to take shape. During the decolonization of Asia after World War II, Indonesia

achieved independence in 1949 following an armed and diplomatic conflict with the Netherlands.

Indonesia consists of hundreds of distinct native ethnic and linguistic groups, with the largest—and politically dominant—ethnic group being the Javanese. A shared identity has developed, defined by a national language, ethnic diversity, religious pluralism within a Muslim-majority population, and a history of colonialism and rebellion against it. Indonesia's national motto, "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika" ("Unity in Diversity" literally, "many, yet one"), articulates the diversity that shapes the country. Indonesia's economy is the world's 16th largest and is a member of several multilateral organizations, including the UN, WTO, IMF and G20. It is also a founding member of Non-Aligned Movement, Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, East Asia Summit, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

12 Interesting Facts about Indonesia

Fact 1



Jakarta's Gelora Bung Karno Stadium is the second largest stadium in the world. It was completed in 1962 to host the Asian Games and its capacity is 120,800 people.

Fact 2

The Komodo dragon is a species of lizard found on the Indonesian islands of Komodo, Rinca, Flores, and Gili Motang. A member of the monitor lizard family Varanidae, it is the largest living species of lizard, growing to a maximum length of 10 feet and weighing up to about 150 pounds.



The Komodo Dragon

Fact 3



Rafflesia arnoldii, commonly called the corpse lily, is a species of flowering plant in the parasitic genus Rafflesia. It has a very strong and unpleasant odor of decaying flesh, earning it the nickname "corpse flower". It is the world's largest flower, weighing up to 15 pounds and only grows on the island of Sumatra, Indonesia. Its petals grow to 1.6 feet long and 1 inch thick.

Fact 4

Indonesia has the second longest coastline in the world (33,554 miles), after Canada.

Fact 5

Indonesia has the largest Muslim population (233 million) in the world. That equates to 87% of Indonesia's total population of 268 million people.

Fact 6



Indonesia was once home to ‘Dolly’, the largest red-light district in Southeast Asia, housing up to 2,000 sex workers in one centralized location. It was shut down in June 2014.

Fact 7



Jakarta has the worst traffic in the World

Fact 8



The longest snakes ever found was discovered in Sulawesi, Indonesia. According to the Guinness World Records, the snake had a length of 32 feet 9.5 inches.

Fact 9



The Grasberg mine, located near Puncak, Jaya is the largest gold mine and the third largest copper mine in the world.

Fact 10



The highest number of deaths as a result of a natural disaster was the December 2004 Earthquake (9.1 magnitude) and Tsunami which predominantly affected Aceh, Indonesia. The total death toll was estimated at 230,000 people.

Fact 11

Indonesia and Monaco have the same flag, but Indonesia's is slightly wider.



Flag of Monaco



Flag of Indonesia



Flag of Poland

Fact 12



After first launching ‘Palapa’ in July 1976, Indonesia became the first developing country to operate their own domestic satellite system.

Hey, you must admit that some of these facts are very interesting. Right!

The Indonesian archipelago holds untold treasures in its diversity of cultures, landscapes, and cities. With nearly 13,500 islands under its jurisdiction, Indonesia offers an adventure for everyone, from exploring ancient temples and hiking active volcanoes to diving in largely untouched waters. You can wander the busy streets of Jakarta or take a step back in time with a visit to the remote villages of Tana Toraja; indulge in the bliss of Bali or come face to face with the volatile Anak Krakatau. Whatever you choose, the experience is sure to be one filled with awe and appreciation for a country as steeped in history and natural beauty as this one.

So, just in case you decide to visit Indonesia after reading this article, here are:

8 Top-Rated Tourist Attractions in Indonesia

- 1. Play on the Beaches of Bali**
- 2. Visit Ubud - the Sacred Monkey Forest**
- 3. See the Orangutans of Borneo**
- 4. Go diving or snorkeling off the Gili Islands**
- 5. Visit Komodo National Park to see the Komodo Dragons**
- 6. Explore the ancient Buddhist Temples of Borobudur**
- 7. See active volcanoes like Mount Bromo and Mount Krakatau**
- 8. Visit the Jatiluwih Rice Fields**



Beaches of Bali



Gili Islands



Orangutans of Borneo



Ubud - the Sacred Monkey Forest



Mount Bromo



Mount Krakatau



Jatiluwih Rice Fields



Buddhist Temples of Borobudur

Indonesia Muslims



There are a lot of Muslims in Indonesia

From what I can tell, most Indonesia Muslims are not a bunch of America-hating terrorists like many in the Mideast. But, before I hop on a plane for Indonesia, I need to find out more about all these Muslims.

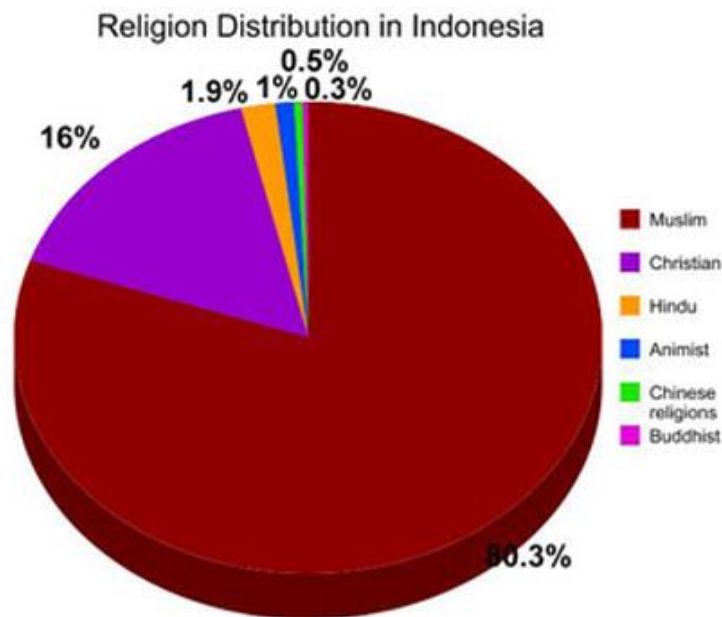
How did there get to be so many Muslims in Indonesia?

Before the arrival of Islam, the predominant religions in Indonesia were Buddhism and Hinduism. Details about the arrival and spread of Islam in Indonesia are unclear but most historians believe it arrived directly from Arabia in the 9th century by way of traders, merchants, and Muslim preachers. Initially, the spread of Islam was slow and gradual but it accelerated in the 15th century, as the military power of Melaka Sultanate in Malay Peninsular today Malaysia and other Islamic Sultanates dominated the region aided by episodes of Muslim coup such as in 1446, wars and superior control of maritime trading and ultimate markets. By the time European merchants such as Portuguese and Dutch traders began actively trading in Indonesia in the 16th century, Buddhism and Hinduism were extinct in the major islands of Indonesia.

Religion in Indonesia

Indonesia is officially a republic, not an Islamic state. The Indonesian Constitution guarantees freedom of religion. However, the government recognizes only six official

religions; (Islam, Protestant Christianity, Roman-Catholic Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism).



Why is Indonesia so much more peaceful than other Muslim nations?

Indonesians are Indonesians first, and then Muslims. Indonesians are very proud of their country, and the country is not an Islamic country, despite the large majority of Muslims. Indonesia's ideology is based on Pancasila, a doctrine meaning "Unity in diversity". Therefore, Indonesia doesn't share the middle-eastern culture that most other Muslim countries in the world subscribe to. Indonesian culture is mostly based on Buddhist and Hindu traditions, so that violent interpretations of the Quran and cultural things like the honor killings are very alien to most of Indonesians.

However, there are several groups of radical Islamic Muslims in Indonesia.

So, is it Safe to Visit Indonesia?

Let's check with U.S. Department of State. Traveling to Indonesia is fairly safe but there is a Travel Advisory - Level 2: Exercise Increased Caution and a Level 3 - Reconsider travel to Central Sulawesi and Papua due to civil unrest.

Reasons for Travel Advisory:

Terrorists continue plotting possible attacks in Indonesia. Terrorists may attack with little or no warning, targeting police stations, places of worship, hotels, bars, nightclubs, shopping areas, and restaurants.

Natural disasters such as earthquakes, tsunamis or volcano eruptions may result in disruptions to transportation, infrastructure, sanitation, and the availability of health services.

Can you buy Beer and other Alcoholic Drinks?

Currently, there are no alcohol bans being enforced in Indonesia, with the exception of Aceh Province. Since 2014, anyone found consuming alcohol or breaching the codes on moral conduct, whether residents or visitors to Aceh, could face between six and nine cane lashes.



Bintang Beer is the largest selling beer of Indonesia

Summary

Indonesia has many beautiful places to visit and many interesting things to see but I think I would prefer going somewhere else. If you decide to visit Indonesia, please be careful and stay away from Central Sulawesi, Papua, and Aceh Province.

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